



The Clay Minerals Society

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THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER



This is my farewell message to members of the Clay Minerals Society (CMS). At the June 2017 CMS Annual Meeting in Edmonton (Canada), I will pass the presidential gavel to Douglas McCarty, who is currently vice-president and already very active in society business. Doug became vice-president in January 2017, ahead of schedule, when Bob Pruett resigned from the position for health reasons. Doug's promotion created a vacancy at the vice-president-elect

position. It was filled by the CMS Executive Committee who asked Lynda Williams—our 2017 candidate for the vice-president elect—to step up ahead of schedule. This change also left vacant the candidate position for the vice-president elect on the 2017 ballot. The Council Nomination Committee proposed Andrei Kalinichev, who was approved by the Council and was listed on the 2017 ballot. Fortunately, CMS bylaws provide guidance how to deal with such unexpected situations. After this experience, I really appreciate on how well our bylaws are constructed, even if we now talk about possible improvements.

I found running CMS to be a very pleasant, rewarding, and instructive experience. Pleasant because I interacted with a group of nice, friendly, knowledgeable people; rewarding because I served a common goal; and instructive because I learned how such business is conducted in America. I really appreciate this knowledge.

The CMS stays financially sound thanks to efforts of very dedicated and knowledgeable people: our treasurer and the Finance and Budget Committee. Also, planning annual conferences well ahead is an established valuable tradition. For the last several years, our major concern has been the declining membership and the declining submissions to *Clays and Clay Minerals*. These are interrelated phenomena: such a small organization is not in a privileged position in the world of contemporary scientometrics, which favors big players. We all know that and we should make a conscious effort to counter these market forces. I tried to turn your attention to this aspect of our scientific life in my bimonthly "President's Corner" contributions.

I wish President Douglas a lot of energy, good ideas, and luck in coping with these and future challenges that the society may face. I knew him closely for the last twenty years and witnessed his great organizational success in turning the USA-based Houston Texaco, then Chevron, lab into an active scientific center. He really has the capacity to contribute a lot—with your help—to the well-being of the CMS.

Jan Srodon (ndsrodon@cyf-kr.edu.pl)
President, the Clay Minerals Society

IN MEMORIAM

On 22 February 2017, **Jirí Konta**, Professor Emeritus of Charles University (Prague, Czech Republic), died at age 95 after a brief illness. Jirí Konta was a world-renowned mineralogist and petrologist, and a prominent member of the clay minerals community.

Jirí Konta was born on 15 February 1922 in Žleby (Czech Republic). He finished high school in Čáslav, Czech Republic in 1942. After World War II, he started his studies at the Charles University Petrographic Institute and graduated with Rerum Naturalium Doctor (RNDr, Doctor of Natural Sciences) degree in 1948. In 1954, he obtained a Candidate of Science degree in mineralogy and petrology, and, in 1961, earned a Doctor of Science degree. He worked as an assistant at Charles University from 1948 to 1952, as an assistant professor during 1952–1961, a professor of sedimentary petrology 1961–1988, and became professor emeritus

in 1988. He served as the Dean of Faculty of Science (1959–1961) and head of the Department of Petrology, Faculty of Sciences (1975–1985). He also was a visiting professor at Pennsylvania State University (USA) in 1965–1966 and at the Technology University (Skopje, Yugoslavia) in 1970.

As noted in his autobiography, *The Beat of My Heart*, published in English in *Clays and Clay Minerals* (2016 v64n1), between 1952 and 1989 his laboratory group "assisted with the dissertations of sixty-five young men and women in Czechoslovakia at the master's, doctoral (RNDr.), and candidate of science levels". His bibliography lists more than 250 publications, including several books, such as *Clay Minerals of Czechoslovakia* in 1957, and *Ceramic and Glass Raw Materials* in 1982. He was a member of the editorial boards for the journals *Acta Universitatis Carolinae Geologica*, *Silikáty*, *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, *Clay Minerals*, and *Applied Clay Science*. During 1959–1993, he also served as editor for twelve "Conference on Clay Mineralogy and Petrology" proceedings.

He was active in the clay science community, both in his native Czech Republic and internationally. He was instrumental in organizing the Czech Clay Mineral group and served as President of the Association International pour l'Etude des Argiles (AIPEIA, International Association for the Study of Clays) from 1985 to 1989. He was on the award committee for the AIPEIA Bradley Award (1986–1989) and the AIPEIA Medal (1994). He was an honorary member of the Mineralogical Society Poland and The Spanish Clay Society. He also set into motion the establishment of the journal *Applied Clay Science*.

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